

16-Year-Old Sheetal Devi, World's First Armless Woman Archer

Born without arms, Sheetal Devi, 16, from Loidhar village in Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir, has made headlines across the world by winning three medals – two gold and one silver in the Asian Para Games held in Hangzhou in China recently.

Sheetal Devi who was born with Phocomelia, a disorder causing under-developed limbs, never imagined an achievement as big as this was possible in her life, she says, “Life was full of challenges, didn’t imagine doing something this big, from my mountainous homeland to the international sporting arena, it has been quiet a journey.”

From Climbing Trees To Winning Gold – Sheetal Devi’s Journey

Sheetal Devi’s inspiring story is a testament to the indomitable power of the human spirit. Even as a child climbing trees was her favourite pastime. Little did she know back then that the muscles she developed by climbing trees would one day help her win gold on an international stage. Talking to a news agency, she said, “Bachpan mein bas trees ki oochaaniyaan ko chhooona chahiti thi, yahi cheez mujhe hamesha khush rakhti thi (I wanted to touch the heights of the trees that was the only thing which made me happy).”

In 2019, she was spotted by the Indian Army at a youth sports event in Kishtwar. The Indian Army took her under its wing and started to provide both educational support and facilitated medical assistance. The army even helped Devi get a prosthetic arm from Bengaluru, but it didn’t work out as the fitting was not right for her. During that period, she was introduced to many sportspersons who motivated her to take up para sports.

After a series of tests, Sheetal Devi was guided to take up para-archery and was introduced to coaches Kuldeep Baidwan and Abhilasha Chaudhary. From 2022, with support from the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Sheetal Devi started getting her training for the para sports.

She underwent rigorous training and honed her skills in archery.

Coaches Abhilasha Chaudhary and Kuldeep Vedwan had never trained an archer without arms. Talking about Sheetal Devi they said,

“In 2012 London Paralympics silver medalist Matt Stutzman used his legs to shoot. We took our inspiration from there and decided to train Sheetal Devi like that. We modified a locally made releaser into a shoulder releaser, put together a string



mechanism for the chin and mouth to create the trigger to help her release the arrow. We improvised based on what we saw Mark Stutzman using.”

Talking about the training, the coaches said, “Sheetal started by shooting 50-100 arrows daily; the count went up to 300 as her strength improved. In a short span of time, she turned into an ace para-archer and started to make headlines. She has helped India won a silver medal at the Para Open Nationals in Sonapat. In the para-archery world championship in the Czech Republic in initial months of 2023, she secured gold, silver and bronze medals, etching her name in history as the world’s first armless woman archer. And now she has won three medals in Asian Para Games. This is just the beginning.”

The archer added that her coach motivated her constantly. Sheetal Devi said that she never thought she could achieve this milestone.

While speaking to the press after her win at the Asian Para Games recently she said, “I felt very good after winning 3 medals. When I started Archery, I never thought I could do this. Today I gave my country 3 medals and I feel very happy.”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also met Sheetal Devi personally to congratulate her for achieving such a huge milestone in her life. He shared a tweet as well to congratulate Sheetal Devi and said, “Proud of Sheetal Devi on her extraordinary Gold Medal in Archery Women’s Individual Compound open event at the Asian Para Games. This achievement is a testament to her grit and determination.”

A tweet was also shared by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, in which PM Modi is seen blessing Sheetal Devi with his right hand on the teen’s head. He captioned the post, “Blessings full of faith.”

Sheetal Devi also spoke about her meeting with the Prime Minister and how it motivated her to do better in future. She told the press,

“We will fully prepare for the Paralympic Games to be held in Paris next year so that we get medals for our country. I met the Prime Minister. He blessed me. He motivated me to continue playing better in the days to come.”

Signing off, Sheetal Devi gave a special message for all the women out there, she added, “My message is that they should work hard with dedication. My coach gave me a life lesson on focusing on one particular thing in life and not worrying about the end result, I did the same, I dedicated all my energy towards focusing on things I love, and during my game, that thought helped me, I have won the gold.”

Kids Craft: DIY Petal Flower



You Will Need:

Square color paper
Pencil
Scissors
Glue

How To:

Choose a paper that you can fold easily. For ease, pick a square-shaped paper so that the kids can start right with the flower.

Fold the square in half, and use a ruler scale to mark the one-third point on the top-left edge of the paper. You can help your kid with this if needed.

Now pull the bottom right corner of the paper towards the one-third point on the top left.

Fold the bottom left corner over the right edge.

Fold the top right corner over the left edge of the paper.

You will have a pointy edge towards the bottom. Cut along the horizontal line made by the edge of the paper.

The resultant would be a wedge.

Starting from the top left corner of the wedge, draw a half-circle that goes down till a half-inch above the bottom right edge.

Cut along the line and open the fold – you have a five-petal flower.

Make colourful petals and enjoy.



FUN RIDDLES

I am often following you and
copying your every move.
Yet you can never touch me
or catch me.
What am I?

English Proverbs and Meanings

* **Let well alone.**
Do not interfere with some thing that is functioning properly or a calm situation.

* **Liars need good memories.**
People who do not tell the truth must be careful to remember what they say.

* **Loose lips sink ships.**
Disclosing important information (to the enemy or a competitor) could result in large losses.

* **Learn to walk before you run.**
Don't rush into doing some

thing until you know how to do it.

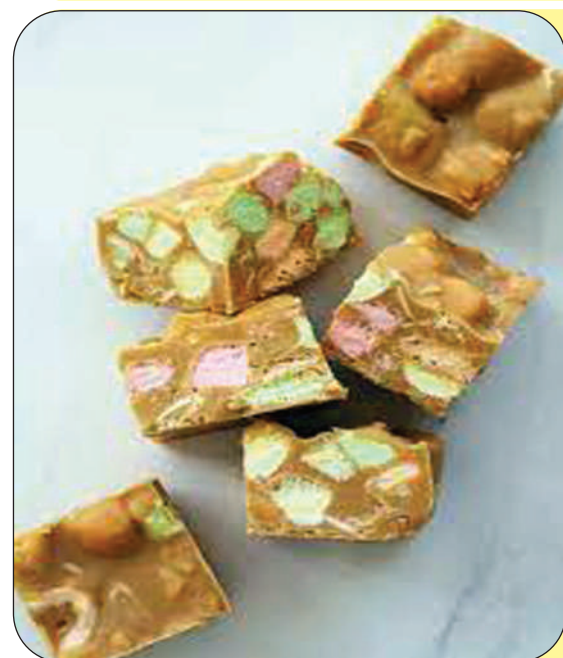
* **Beauty is only skin deep.**
A person's character is more important than their appearance.

* **Little strokes fell great oaks.**
If you divide a task into small parts, it becomes easier to do.

* **Least said soonest mended.**
The more discreet you are, the less damage you cause.

* **Let bygones be bygones.**
Let's forgive and forget past.

Choc rainbow squares



Ingredients:

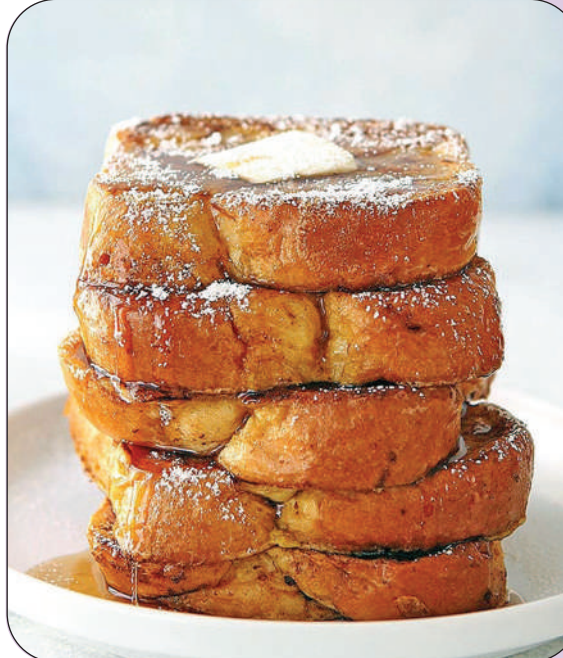
1/2 cup butter (melted)
1/2 cup brown sugar (firmly packed)
1 egg
1 cup desiccated coconut
2 tbs Nestlé Baking Cocoa
3/4 cup self-raising flour
1 cup Milk Chocolate Melts
100 g Smarties

METHOD

Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan-forced). Line a 20cm square cake tin with baking paper.
Combine butter, sugar and egg. Stir in coconut and then sift in the Nestlé Baking Cocoa and flour.
Spoon into prepared tin and bake 15-17 minutes until just firm when touched.
Sprinkle Nestlé Milk Choc Bits over the cake, then sprinkle over the Nestlé Smarties. Press down lightly with the back of a wooden spoon.
Return to the oven for 5 minutes.
Allow to cool in the pan then cut into squares to serve.
Enjoy !

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Fluffy French Toast



Ingredients:

1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup milk
1 pinch salt
3 eggs
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon white sugar
12 thick slices bread

Method

Measure flour into a large mixing bowl.
Slowly whisk in the milk.
Whisk in the salt, eggs, cinnamon, vanilla extract and sugar until smooth.
Heat a lightly oiled griddle or frying pan over medium heat.
Soak bread slices in mixture until saturated.
Cook bread on each side until golden brown.
Serve hot.